

**Heritage Letter about William Hadfield**  
**On the marriage of an descendent**  
**By Karen Adams**

Dear Matt and Amber,

Congratulation on your marriage. Wanting to give you something special we have chosen something practical (this Hadfield mailbox stamp holder) and with it of course a family story. Matt, you are the son of Carrie H. Biggs who is the daughter of Carl Hadfield who is the son of Dale Hadfield who is the son of William Hadfield. William Hadfield began his working career as a mail carrier in Lehi, Utah in the year 1907. He was 28 years of age and had been married for two years. At this time, he had an infant daughter named Alice. For over 37 years, William made a living delivering mail. He retired in 1944. He always said, “ I am rich in everything but money”.

William delivered mail over a 26 1/2 mile route with a horse and buggy. He used this horse drawn carriage for many years and would take one horse on the morning route which was the east side of Lehi, down to the Sugar Factory and up the fourth ward area and third ward areas (northwest side of Lehi) and would change horses when he came home for lunch. Sometimes it was late in the afternoon when he got his lunch. Then he would take the second horse and go down Trinnaman Lane and then over the river, back on the Cedar Fort road to the lake road and then down to the Utah Lake. Some winters were very severe and roads were bad. There was no snow fighting equipment other than horse drawn snow-plows, to keep the roads open. In the winter William would take the wheels off, and put sleigh runners in their place. There were some days that he would tie his horse to a post and take his mailbag and go on foot or pull it on a sleigh to the isolated snowed-in patrons.

Merrill Rolph of Lehi told also of a time that he had fallen through the ice on Utah Lake while ice skating. He was cold and wet, but a kind mailman stopped his

mail wagon and gave him a ride back to his home in Lehi.

William wore on his hat a badge that said P.O.D. R.R. #1 which meant he was the first rural route carrier in Lehi. Summer delivery days were long and hot. The good flowing wells were a real treat. The well at the old river bridge tasted sort of muddy, but those down in the fields were always clear, cold and sweet. William would pick the green crisp watercress growing near the water and bring it home to the family. Many times as the horse trotted along William would tread some delightful stories from a magazine and would read some delightful stories from a magazine and would tell his family these stories at night.

In 1913, William was chosen as the Utah representative to the National Convention of Mail Carriers held in Evansville, Indiana. He was the first and only Mormon present at the convention. When a roll call was given for a count of how many delegates would be bringing a spouse or a partner to the evening dinner and dancing. William made the request for three tickets. The announcer repeated, “The delegate from Utah requests three tickets.” Everyone snickered, assuming the extra was for more than one wife. William, of course, showed up with the full time missionaries serving in the area.

Later, when automobiles came into use, William bought a Model T Ford which he used for many years. Because there were so many stops and starts he had to change the brake bands often. Later he bought a Model A Ford with a black top. A son Horace writes about going on the mail route with his father.

*“It was winter time and must have been Christmas vacation or else a Saturday. The roads had not been plowed and in some places the snow drifted quite deep. We had tire chains on and felt confident that we could get through any where any other car could. We followed another car’s tracks through the deep snow and finally it just got too deep. The old Ford was pushing it up in front of the radiator. When finally we got stuck, Dad couldn’t believe that another car had been through and we couldn’t make it. Well here comes Tommy Colledge and his team of horse and pulled us out so we could head back toward*

*home to the plowed roads. Dad asked Tommy what kind of car we had been following. Tommy said that it wasn't a car at all, it was his rubber tired wagon. After that Dad felt better about the snow plowing ability of his old Ford"*

More than once, William would take one of his sons on the route. As troubled teens, they spent the time talking man to man and this helped all of them over the rough spots in life.

One of the mail patrons, Rhonda Clark Arnold told how Mr. Hadfield each spring respected a family of birds that had made a nest in their family mailbox. The mailbox was flat and opened from the top, and bluebirds built a nest in it. Rather than disturb the birds, William would honk and wait for someone to come out for their mail rather than disturb the birds. The same bluebirds would return each spring for several years. Many of the patrons would remember their mailman at times by placing homemade cookies, candies, and even notes in their box with the flag up. Such families as the Gunthers, the Thrashers, the Wilsons, or the Clarks.

Years later, Doris Hadfield daughter of Horace writes about her ride with William, her grandfather in delivering the mail:

*"On occasional afternoons, I ate lunch with Grandpa and Grandma Hadfield. I would then climb into the seat of Honor (some call it the passenger seat) in Grandpa's old black car. We then waved good-bye to Grandma and continued on around the mail route."*

*"To a five year old girl this was magic of the best kind. I got to hold the bundles of sorted mail with their tight brown leather straps around them and was allowed to put letter and magazines into the appropriate mail-boxes. As grandpa drove, we sang and talked and had a great time."*

*"At the beginning to one of these journeys, Grandpa reached into one of the mail pouches, and with a twinkle in his eye, asked me to 'take care of the Package' and what a packet it was! It was a little wooden crate with a tiny green*

*turtle crawling around inside. Someone far away in a place called California was sending the turtle to the Clark Nelson children."*

*"I held it carefully all the way over the river bridge, past the other side and then back over the river and through Evansville(an area so named because of the many Evans families in the locality). At Nelsons, I had a hard time putting my new friend in that old mailbox. Grandpa smiled at me and explained the things in the mail don't belong to us and that someone was trusting he and I to deliver their package. I was so sad that it took a banana Popcicle from Jess Foxes' little store to mend my broken heart.*

William retired in 1944, and in 1954, his companion and red-headed sweetheart passed away. Years passed slowly now and William had much time to think. He filled some of that time with writing letters to his family and friends. In 1970, William wrote the following letter to his friends-Mr. and Mrs. Thomas A. Colledge.

*"My dear Friends of Yesterday:*

*If I only had the old Bay Mare and the Mail Cab, I probably would get into it and come and see you, but as I do not have them, I am coming to see you on a note of paper. I sure do miss those great friends, most of them have gone to sleep. I had a lovely 1/2 hour with Joe Menford at the Mortuary last week. I have learned what it means to have friends to help you when you cannot help yourself. How are you sinch I have left the old 3rd Ward? I am amongst a new group of people. I still have my old house but it is not home any more. The old Mail Route has changed and Uncle Nephi Slater's home is about to fall down. I have my girls or boys give me a ride over the old route when they take me for a ride. Perhaps they will need a Mailman in Paradise. I so, I will ask for the job. Well folks, I am now 91 years old so my hands are wobbly, so please excuse poor writing and accept my best blessings for you."*

*Sincerely, Your Old Friend-Bishop William Hadfield*

Well newlyweds, this is our family history gift for you. We hope you will cherish your heritage and even want to know more. Family History is a great hobby! Probably you won't have time to be too involved with the past for awhile but eventually we hope you will be.

May you cherish your Hadfield heritage every time you use a stamp from the mailbox.

Aunt Karen Adams and Uncle Dan

Aunt Mary Pinkham

Aunt Amy Barnes and Uncle Johnny